UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.5/1997/2
30 January 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Thirty-fifth session
25 February-6 March 1997
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

BACKGROUND

1. In its resolution 1996/7, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission for Social Development shall have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, and that the substantive items of the agenda of the Commission for Social Development for its future sessions would be considered under the rubric of follow-up to the Summit, and would consist of the following:

(a) Consideration of subjects identified in the multi-year programme of work, including the situation of social groups;

(b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups, as necessary;

(c) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting social development, as necessary.

2. In the same resolution, the Council decided on a multi-year programme of work for the consideration of priority subjects, bearing in mind that the core issues of the Summit are interrelated and interdependent, and that issues shall be considered every year related to the enabling environment for social development, the special situation of Africa and the least developed countries, the enhancement of social development goals in structural adjustment programmes,

* E/CN.5/1997/1.

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the mobilization of domestic and international resources for social development, and the framework for international, regional and subregional cooperation for social development, and also bearing in mind that the Commission should apply a gender perspective when discussing the different topics under the multi-year programme of work. The Council scheduled the theme "Productive employment and sustainable livelihoods" for the thirty-fifth session of the Commission. A report on that theme, prepared by the International Labour Organization as task manager for the United Nations system, is before the Commission (E/CN.5/1997/3, annex).

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

3. In his report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (A/51/348), the Secretary-General provided up-to-date information and details about the initiatives of national Governments, actions taken by the United Nations, the activities of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the mobilization of financial resources, and the involvement of civil society and other actors. The Commission is invited to refer to that report in its deliberations on the present item.

4. In its resolution 51/202 on implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, the General Assembly, inter alia:

(a) Stressed the importance of national action and international cooperation for social development;

(b) Reiterated the Summit's call for Governments to assess on a regular basis national progress towards implementing the outcome of the Summit, possibly in the form of periodic national reports outlining successes, problems and obstacles, and encouraged Governments to submit such information on a voluntary basis to the Commission for Social Development;

(c) Endorsed Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/48 on new and innovative ideas for generating funds, in which, inter alia, the Council decided that funds generated by new and innovative ideas should not substitute for official development assistance, should be distinct from funding the regular and peacekeeping budgets of the United Nations, and should be part of global partnership and interdependence, and that the role of private investment in financing development should be stressed;

(d) Reaffirmed the need for effective partnership and cooperation between Governments and the relevant actors of civil society, the social partners, and the major groups as defined in Agenda 21, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the implementation of and follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action, as well as the need for ensuring their involvement in the planning, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of social policies at the national level; and encouraged non-governmental organizations to participate to the maximum extent possible in the work of the

Commission, in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31 and Council decision 1996/315, as well as in the implementation process of the Summit;

(e) Invited Governments to support the work of the Commission, including through the participation of high-level representatives on social development issues and policies;

(f) Welcomed Council resolution 1996/36, in which the Council decided to continue to ensure, on a regular basis, the harmonization and coordination of the multi-year programmes of relevant functional commissions by promoting a clear division of labour among them and providing clear policy guidance to them;

(g) Established arrangements for the special session of the General Assembly in the year 2000 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit. The Commission for Social Development, as the functional commission of the Council with the primary responsibility for follow-up to the Summit and for review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, will undertake work in 1999/2000 in preparation for the special session, in accordance with its programme of work as set out in Council resolution 1996/7. A preparatory committee of the whole of the General Assembly is to be established at its fifty-second session; the committee will hold an organizational session in 1998, will initiate substantive activities in 1999 on the basis of inputs by the Commission and the Council, and will take into account contributions by other relevant organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.